Concordia UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE STUDIES NEWS

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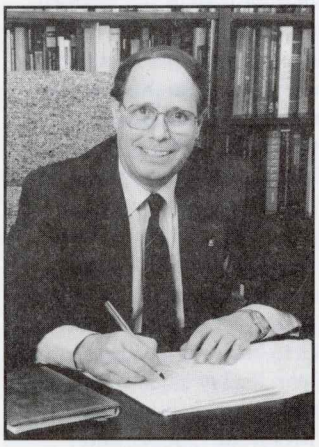
From the Dean's Desk

Noblesse Oblige



Many academic disciplines are divided into "schools of thought" which have the privilege and freedom to attack each other vehemently in public and in private. In this way they are no different from political parties, sports organizations, or gossip columnists. Thus, the lofty thoughts and ideals associated with academia are often out of phase with concrete reality and daily practice. Nevertheless, one of the deeper aspirations of intellectual integrity which finds expression in the academic community, is the belief and hope that the more profound thoughts espoused within the community should be lived as well as thought.

Academic Appeals

In many ways, Canadian professors are no different from professors elsewhere. Canadian universities, on the other hand, are often less intellectually chauvinistic and arrogant than many other universities. Significant evidence of this difference is provided by the processes and structures of the universities themselves.

On the whole, Canadian universities are quite human, just, and responsive to social needs and values of the community which surrounds them. It is commonplace, for example, to evaluate students by a system where the final course marks are generous amalgams of term and examination marks. As well, dissatisfied students have access to rereads, academic appeals, and ultimately to the ombuds office. Our good graduates are no less able and no less qualified in their disciplines than their European counterparts in spite of our more accommodating procedures.

Occasionally, the system fails. After an altercation between two professors in a graduate seminar, I was asked to pronounce myself, as dean, on the code of professional conduct in graduate examinations. I was not present at the seminar and it is impossible to reconstruct the details of the confrontation from the two accounts of the incident. My inclination is to seek a structural solution, believing that prevention is better than cure.

It must be said that universities throughout the world are struggling with such conflicts of values. The Science Research Council of Great Britain has published a marvellous little booklet on thesis supervision that implicitly addresses the issue of thesis examinations. The authors insist that an essential component of predicable success in doctoral studies is the systematic involvement of the student in departmental seminars in which their research results are appropriately scrutinized and challenged. The credibility and confidence of the candidate grow in this process as does the confidence of potential examiners in the value, correctness, and originality of the student's research. In a setting of trust and mutual respect, it is more than likely that professors are guided by the maxim that "noblesse oblige."

In these kinds of contemporary situations, the deeper responsibility of the professor is to act in accordance with principles based on the growing recognition of the intrinsic value of all human life. Only then can we claim, as we do, that one of the primary functions of a university is to be a civilizing agent.

M.E. Szabo
Dean

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Graduate Education in the Faculty of Fine Arts

by Barbara Verity

The Faculty of Fine Arts at Concordia is the largest in Canada yet the smallest within the University. Its distinctive identity is evident in the innovative approach to programs offered by the Faculty, as well as its openness to change and responsiveness to the artistic community.

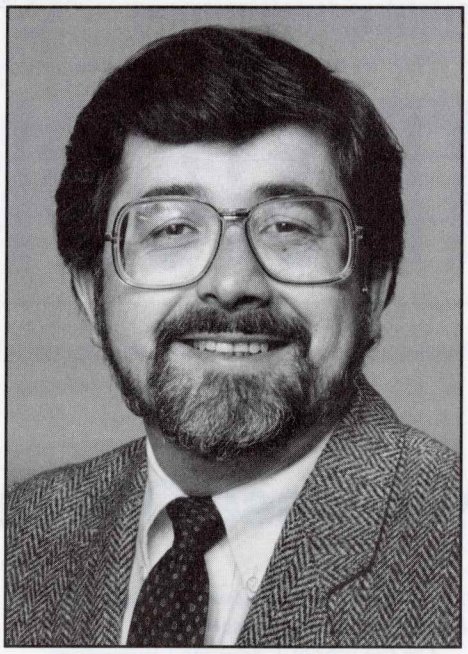
Few Faculties of Fine Arts exist across the country, most art programs being set within the structure of a department rather than a Faculty. Concordia's Fine Arts Faculty was founded in 1976 by one of its predecessors, Sir George Williams University, where training in Fine Arts reaches as far back as the 1940s.

Enrolment in the Faculty of Fine Arts is 2,200, which includes 200 graduate students. Small is beautiful, as far as this Faculty is concerned, Dean Robert Parker says. Fourteen years ago, the Faculty Council decided to limit graduate student numbers in order to ensure the excellence of its programs, he says. "We could be a much larger Faculty is we so desired. Size affects to some extent the quality of the teaching that we wish to pursue and foster, so we put a quota system in place. Each program has a number of graduate students that will be accepted each year. We always have far more applications than we can accept."

Dean Parker says that despite the quota system, the faculty is able to respond to the needs of the artistic community and to individuals coming up through the system. And the relatively low enrolment means that students receive plenty of individual attention. "We're very conscious of our students and their needs and of trying to address those needs. We know our students, so it becomes very personalized," he explains.

The small size also contributes to the flexibility and openness to change within the Faculty. "That doesn't mean that we change programs every week or every year or anything like that, but the configuration changes. It takes on different characteristics as the art world changes. We respond to that," Dean Parker says.

As an example, he points to the concept of multi-disciplinary work that has developed in the artistic community. The Faculty is moving rapidly to formulate a program to address the needs relating to this type of work. "We have faculty members who are very much interested in that and are a part of that. They bring their ideas back, which allows us to grow and develop."



Dean Robert Parker

Being open to change is central to the Faculty's identity. "It would be dangerous to say that we stand for any particular approach to art. If one does that, then one tends to close the system. That makes me nervous and I think it would make the entire faculty very nervous because a closed system doesn't allow for any innovation, which is what we're all about: change and innovation and movement."

National and International

The graduate programs offered by the Faculty underscore his statement. In each one, the Faculty distinguishes itself. The Ph.D. in Art Education is the only one of its kind in Canada, growing rapidly in reputation both nationally and internationally since it began in 1977. The department also has a master's and a diploma in the same discipline.

In Art History, the Faculty offers the only master's devoted exclusively to the study and research of Canadian Art and Art History. It is a fully professional program directed towards educating specialists in the practice of art and historical research in the visual arts and architecture.

In Art Therapy, Concordia is the only Canadian university giving full professional training in that discipline. A diploma program is also offered, and both programs combine approaches in England, France and the United States to the discipline. Through these programs, the Faculty is contributing to the growth of art therapy across the country.

Within Quebec, Concordia is one of only two universities with a master's in Studio Arts. When it began in 1972, the degree was the only one offered in eastern Canada. A wide range of concentrations has since developed within the Concordia program, covering ceramics, fibres, film production, open media, painting/drawing, photography, print-making and sculpture.

Innovation within the Faculty of Fine Arts results from being responsive and open to the artistic community, Dean Parker explains. "The individuals who were the original architects of this Faculty recognized the need for progress within this province, and they developed the programs — whether it be in Art History or Art Education or Studio Arts. It really is very much a process of people - bright, intelligent, visionary people in this Faculty who have been able to respond to those needs. I think that's one of the exciting elements of this Faculty. That's been true of the 1960s and it's been true ever since."

"It's that type of individual that we look to who is flexible and has a vision and is very much attuned to and involved in and excited by the artistic community, and who wishes to bring those ideas into the Faculty," Dean Parker says.

Over the years, practising artists with reputations in Montreal, Quebec and Canada have been hired. With them comes their knowledge of the artistic community. "They are very conscious of the needs that exist within the community. By being part of the artistic community, they can respond to those needs and begin to implement programs," the Dean says.

The programs in Art Education and Art Therapy developed in this way, he explains. "As a result, we have unique programs that really meet the needs of the community. People recognize that we offer an excellent education in the Fine Arts."

The Faculty also shows its responsiveness to the community by offering many bilingual services. From the start, a high proportion of students have been French-speaking, and so the Faculty has made sure that its publications are bilingual and that students can be served in either English or French. And since many of the professors are bilingual, students can often be responded to in class on a one-to-one basis in either language. "We just do this naturally. It's been done for so many years, I guess we've just assumed that's

how it is. We're very comfortable with that mix and we seek it out," Dean Parker says.

In fact, a mix of students - anglophone, francophone and allophone - is ideal, he adds. And a mix of students from within the province and beyond is another welcome contribution to the Faculty's vitality. Each person brings their own background and ideas.

Ties are maintained beyond the university in other ways. Art Education students, for instance, teach in schools and recreation centres and are involved in projects with the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Art Therapy students do internships in various hospitals of the area. In Studio Arts, cinema students, for example, work with the National Film Board; dancers take part in performances with other institutions in the artistic community; and theatre students perform in plays and competitions such as the Quebec Drama Festival.

"One only has to pick up the newspaper and start looking at the galleries and recognize any number of our faculty who are actively involved in the gallery scene. Or start looking at theatre events and musical events and you see our faculty and students more often than not," Dean Parker says.

International links have also been forged, particularly with Poland, Italy and France. In 1988, the Faculty became the first in the western world to establish a joint program with the Polish government. Through the five-year exchange program, Concordia became the principal point of entry for all cultural, artistic and academic groups visiting Canada from Poland. Students and faculty exchanges with Polish universities are now underway.

For the past three years, the Faculty has also offered students a summer course of work in Italy and France through the Department of Painting and Drawing.

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Dean Parker adds that the Faculty also has other types of informal agreements, for example, faculty exchanges with countries such as Russia, China and South America.

The Faculty maintains ties with the artistic community across Canada through its Journal of Canadian Art History, which publishes research from Concordia and other universities. The Concordia Art Gallery, with its fine collection of Canadian work, also keeps the University in touch with the artistic community through its excellent series of exhibitions. Among the gallery's paintings is the Ann Savage Collection, the work of an early Montreal art teacher and well-known artist.

Also available to the public is a $4 million concert hall, which opened early this year on the Loyola Campus, allowing students and faculty to perform in a professional setting. The hall will likely have an impact on the plans to expand the Diploma in Advanced Music Performance to the master's level, Dean Parker says.

Other new programs are also in view for the future. Discussions are underway between Concordia and other Montreal universities to offer a joint Ph.D. in Art History. The details are now being worked out, and Dean Parker expects the program to go before Faculty Council next year and possibly began in 1991. Although the master's now offered by Concordia in Art History is designed around Canadian Art History, the joint doctoral program will be more broadly based, he says.

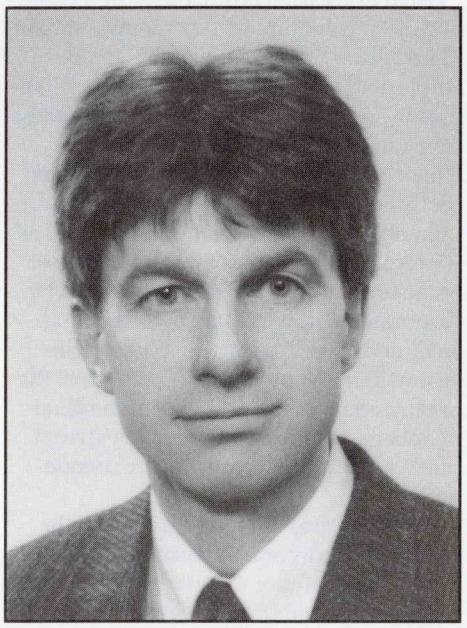
This will be the Faculty's first joint program. During the past decade, several of these programs have been developed in Montreal, with Concordia being involved from the start. Through joint programs, several universities combine their resources to offer a graduate degree together.

Another direction being pursued by the Faculty of Fine Arts is to develop more training programs in therapy. The new programs will be in Expressive Art Therapy: Drama Therapy, Music Therapy - and in the distant future, perhaps Dance Therapy, Dean Parker says. "So we will be offering four therapies within our Faculty. We need to think of some structure that will bring these experiences together. It is premature to say more than that."

As the Faculty of Fine Arts continues to develop new programs and maintain its open, humanistic spirit, Concordia will continue making its mark on the development of Fine Arts in Quebec and Canada. As Dean Parker says, "The notion of flexibility is extremely important in Fine Arts. It is constantly changing which I think is important and very exciting."

Design and Identity

by Michael Large



Michael Large

In its broadest sense, design is basic to all planned activity and cannot be regarded as an esoteric or exclusive discipline. In the professional sphere, it is an integral part of the complex social process of creating the mass-produced artifacts and mass communications which are central to our culture. Therefore design has wider implications than the specifically aesthetic or technical control which is its recognized sphere in fields as diverse as fashion or engineering. Since the industrial revolution, debate about design has tended to centre on questions of aesthetics and on its relationship to technological and market changes, rather than (with the exception of its use in propaganda or advertising) its links with basic cultural assumptions. However, the aims of design, whether the products of the activity are objects or communications, are ultimately perceptual and behavioural.

Cultural Context

Through design, a persuasive invitation is extended to the audience to feel, think or act in the desired way. By providing visual form and organization, designers are the cultural intermediaries in this process. Any study of the design activity therefore has to consider its cultural context. The social situations in which design operates must be examined if a body of meaningful, transferable knowledge is to be developed concerning design's role.

Perceptions of individual and collective identity are an area in which design is a particularly subtle and pervasive factor.

Visual expression is obviously significant in denoting an individual's membership of a subculture or an organization, for example, and it is equally important in establishing and maintaining the distinctiveness of organizations of all kinds. Identity, which grows out of cultural assumptions, centres on an awareness of continuity and uniqueness, and is therefore recognized as strategically important for the survival of organizations. It is visually articulated by corporate identity design, the sum of (a) an effort to instill a sense of personal investment in the unity and objectives of the organization on the part of its individual members, and (b) a statement to external publics about the organization's uniqueness.

Abstract graphic symbols may be the only part of corporate identity which many people notice, but we are now completely surrounded by the visual corporate presence, in all media and in every area of the built environment. In this complete system for packaging complex social entities, all artifacts have a communication function. Apart from obvious areas (such as products, retail environments and stationery) corporate architecture, for example, is a (relatively) permanent medium. This is symptomatic of a culture increasingly concerned with the manipulation and processing of images rather than things.

Ideological and Strategic Goals

Though expressing and building organizational identity through the consistent use of symbols and artifacts has occurred throughout history, the current concept of managed corporate identity grew out of brand identity - a nineteenth century marketing invention for differentiating otherwise similar products. However, corporate identity design consists of more than labelling and its aims are broader than marketing. Corporate graphics systems are ubiquitous not just because they offer the long-term cost benefits of rationalization or act as a marketing aid (though both of these factors are often cited). Visual appeal and memorability are not only decorative, they serve ideological and strategic goals.

The use of corporate identity design is therefore closely linked with organizational concerns of unity, communication, control and survival. These issues affect all large organizations, whether public service institutions or profit-centred, multinational conglomerates. Most of the latter have developed well-known, global, visual identity programs as part of their strategy for coping with the destabilizing impact of increasing technological, structural and environmental change, and in order to announce changes which they have instigated themselves. The long term development of a designed identity is therefore inextricably bound to the cycle of corporate history (birth, growth, diversification, and merger or takeover). In responding to the need for change or for continuity the programs are constantly revising or reaffirming identity.

Political and Cultural Issues

Identity design also addresses people within organizations (unlike marketing, which is concerned with sales to consumers) and may be see as a palliative for the internal communications problems of large scale organizations, where personal contact is not possible. The federal identity program of the Canadian government, and less extensive schemes in other countries, demonstrate that this influences graphic communication in non-profit organizations in the same way as commercial corporations. Instigated at a time of national crisis (1970), the Canadian program was meant to address political and cultural issues by acting as an agent for change within government while reinforcing the federal presence in the external environment. It attempted this through applying the national symbols (the flag, the coat of arms and the Canada "wordmark") and the policy of bilingualism, consistently in all government communications across the country. This involved, for example, all the signs in approximately 20,000 government installations, all government print material, vehicles and even the graphics on the space shuttle's robot arm.

The role of culture, the aspect of corporate life concerned with meaning and individual motivation, has been widely acknowledged in recent years as a significant factor in meeting the challenges described earlier. The central theme of the popular literature on this subject (inspired by Japanese success and a recognition of the destructiveness of adversarial corporate cultures) has been the idea that leadership can build and manage cultures. One expression of this ideological view of organizational culture in the eighties has been the boom in professional identity design, the practise of which is moving closer to management consultancy as design becomes better integrated with other management activities. Clearly, in affirming group identity, design has an ideological function because it is also a form of cultural intervention from the top. Identity design functions as an authority-controlled system which aims to influence the attitudes and behaviour of people both inside and outside the organization. Despite the negative connotations of propaganda that this implies, it is impossible to separate information and persuasion completely. Centralized control over visual presentation, though it automatically legitimizes the centre, is also essential in order to avoid visual chaos and to promote clarity of communication. By creating visual symbols and visual order, design is used to centre presentation and to communicate. It therefore plays an important cultural role in the survival of organizations by focusing and interpreting corporate identity for internal and external publics.

Michael Large is a Ph.D. graduate of the Special Individual Program. His doctoral thesis was entitled "Graphic Design and Corporate Identity." He is presently teaching in the Department of Design Art in the Faculty of Fine Arts at Concordia University.

Upcoming Doctoral Examinations

TANG, Yuan Yan
Computer Science
Date: May 1, 1990 at 10:00 a.m.
Location: H-773
Title: *Entropy-reduced Transformation and Multiple-level Information Source Models for Pattern Recognition*

BALACHANDAR, Ramaswami
Civil Engineering
Date: May 4, 1990 at 9:30 a.m.
Location: H-929-23
Title: *Characteristics of Separated Flows Including Cavitation Effects*

The examinations for the above students will take place in the Hall Building, 1455 de Maisonneuve West, Montreal.